

M.^r Smith in the Character of Alexander.



Hence from my Sight.
Act V. Scene I.

Published by J. Harrison, Jan^y 1779.

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Printed

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Alexander the Great.

T R A G E D Y.

As it is Acted at the

T H E A T R E S - R O Y A L

I N

Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

Written by NATHANIEL LEE, Gent.

—Natura sublimis & acer,
Nam spirat tragicum fatis, & feliciter audet.

HOR. EPIST. AD AUG.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. HARRISON, No 18, Paternoster-Row; and Sold, likewise, by
J. WENMAN, Fleet-Street; and all other Booksellers.

M DCC LXXIX.

PROLOGUE.

Written by Sir C. SCROOP, Bart.

HOW hard the fate is of the scribbling drudge,
Who writes to all, when yet so few can judge!
Wit, like religion, once divine was thought;
And the dull crowd believ'd as they were taught;
Now each fanatic fool presumes to explain
The text, and does the sacred writ profane:
For, while your wits each other's fall pursue,
The sops usurp the pow'r belongs to you.
You think y' are challeng'd in each new play-bill,
And here you come for trial of your skill.
Where, fencer-like, you one another hurt,
While, with your wounds, you make the rabble sport.
Others there are, that have the brutal will
To murder a poor play, but want the skill.
They love to fight, but seldom have the wit
To spy the place where they may thrust and bit;
And therefore, like some bully of the town,
Ne'er stand to draw, but knock the poet down.
With these, like boys in gardens, it succeeds,
They root up all, and know not flow'rs from weeds.
As for you, sparks, that bicker come each day,
To set your wits on fire, and set your minds on fire;
Rehearse your usual follies to the pit,
And with loud nonsense drown the stage's wit;
Talk of your clothes, your last debauches tell,
And witty bargains to each other sell;
Glout on the silly she, who, for your sake,
Can vanity and noise, for love mistake;
Till the coquette sing in the next lampoon,
Is, by her jealous friends, sent out of town:
For in this duelling, intriguing age,
The love you make, is like the war you wage;
But 'tis still prevented e'er you come to engage.
But 'tis not to such trifling foes as you,
The mighty Alexander deigns to sue;
No, he despises the pit, he despises the stage;
But to the men of sense for aid he flies;
On their experience d'arms he now depends,
Nor fears he odds, if they but prove his friends;
For as he once a little bandful chose,
The numerous armies of the world to oppose;
So, back'd by you, who understand the rules,
He hopes to rout the mighty host of fools.

EPILOGUE.

WHATE'ER they mean, yet ought they to be
curst,
Who this censorious age did polish first:
Who the best play, for one poor error blame,
As priests against our ladies' arts declaim,
And for one patch both soul and body damn.
But what does more provoke the actors' rage,
(For we must show the grievance of the stage)
Is, that our women which adorn each play,
Bred at our cost, become at length our prey:
While some are sav'd, like trees we bear them all,
But when they're mellow, straight to you they fall.

You watch 'em bare and squab, and let 'em rest,
But with the first young down you snatch the nest.
Pray leave those poaching tricks, if you are wise,
E'er we take out our letters of reprisal.
For we have wou'd to find a sort of toys
Known to Black Friars, a tribe of chopping boys;
If once they come, they'll quickly spoil your sport;
'I here's not one lady will receive your court;
But for the youth in petticoats run wild,
With, Oh! the archest wag, the sweetest child.
The panting breast, white hands, and lily feet,
No more shall your pall'd thoughts with pleasure meet.
The woman in boy's clothes, all boy shall be,
And never raise your thoughts above the knee.
Well, if our women knew how false you are,
They wou'd say here, and this new trouble spare:
Poor souls, they think all gospel you relate,
Charm'd with the noise of settling an estate:
But when at last your appetites are full,
And the tir'd Cupid grows, with action, dull;
You'll find some trick to cut off the entail,
And send 'em back to us all worn and stale.
Perhaps they'll find our stage, while they have rang'd
To some vile canting conventicle chang'd:
Where, for the sparks who once resorted there,
Which their cur'd sinners but scented all the air,
They'll see grave blockheads with short greasy hair,
Green-aprons, steeple-bats, and collar-bands;
Dull, sniv'ling rogues, that ring, not clap their hands.
Where, for gay punks that drew the shining crowd,
And miss that in wipers laugh'd aloud,
They'll hear young sisters sigh, see matrons old
Tear their cap and cheeks, their pill'd kenchers bold;
Whose zeal too might persuade, in spite to you,
Our flying angels to augment their crew;
While Farringdon their hero struts about 'em,
And ne'er a damning critic dares to flout 'em.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

ALEXANDER the Great.
PHILIP, Alexander's Favourite.
LYSIMACHUS, Prince of the Blood.
CASSANDER,
POLYPERCHON, } Conspirators.
PHILIP,
CLYTUS, Master of the Horse.
THESSALUS, the Median.
PERDICUS, a Commander.
EUMENES,
ARISTANDER, a Soothsayer.
Slaves.

WOMEN.

ROXANA, first Wife of Alexander.
SYSIGAMBIS, Mother of the Royal Family.
HARPAGUS, in love with Lysimachus.
STATIRA, married to Alexander.

SCENE, BABYLON.

18. NO. 1. SCENE, BABYLON.

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Alexander the Great.

A C T I.

SCENE, the Gardens of Semiramis.

Hephestion and Lyfimachus fighting, Clytus parting them.

Cly. WHAT, are you madmen? This a time for quarrel?

Put up, I say—Or, by the gods, that form'd me, He who refuses, makes a foe of Clytus.

Lys. I have his sword.

Cly. But must not have his life.

Lys. Must not, old Clytus!

Cly. Hair-brain'd boy, you must not.

Heph. Lend me thy sword, thou father of the war, Thou far-fam'd guard of Alexander's life.

Curse on this weak, unexecuting arm!

Lend it, old Clytus, to redeem my fame;

Lyfimachus is brave, and else will scorn me.

Lys. There, take thy sword; and, since thou'rt bent on death,

Know, 'tis thy glory that thou dy'st by me.

Cly. Stay thee, Lyfimachus: Hephestion, hold;

I bar you both. My body interpos'd,

Now let me see which of you dares to strike.

By Jove, you've stirr'd the old man:—that rash arm

That first advances, moves against the gods.

And our great king, whose deputy I stand. [rel.]

Lys. Some proper time must terminate our quarrel.

Heph. And cure the bleeding wounds my honour bears.

Cly. Some prop'r time! 'tis false—no hour is proper;

No time should see a brave man do amiss.

Say, what's the noble cause of all this madness?

What vast ambition blows the dangerous fire?

Why, a vain, smiling, whining, cox'ning woman:

By all my triumphs, in the heat of youth,

When towns were sack'd, and beauties prostrate lay,

When my blood boil'd, and nature work'd me high,

Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame;

I knew 'em, and despis'd their cobweb arts.

The whole sex is not worth a soldier's thought.

Lys. Our cause of quarrel may to thee seem light;

But know, a less has set the world in arms.

Cly. Yes, Troy, they tell us, by a woman fell;

Curse on the sex, they are the bane of virtue!

Death! I'd rather this right-arm were lost,

Than that the king should hear of your imprudence—

What, on a day thus set apart for triumph!

Lys. We were, indeed, to blame.

Cly. This memorable day,

When our hot master, whole impatient soul

Out-rides the sun, and fights for other worlds

To spread his conquests, and diffuse his glory,

Now bids the trumpet for a while be silent,

And plays with monarchs, whom he us'd to drive;

Shall we, by broils, awake him into rage,

And rouse the lion that has ceas'd to roar?

Lys. Clytus, thou'rt right—Put up thy sword, Hephestion!

Had passion not eclips'd the light of reason,

Untold we might this consequence have seen.

Heph. Why has not reason power to conquer love?

Why are we thus enslav'd?

Cly. Because unman'd;

Because ye follow Alexander's steps.

Heavens! that a face should thus bewitch his soul,

And ruin all that's great and godlike in it!

Talk be my bane, yet the old man must talk;

Not to be lov'd, when he at thus fought,

And join'd in mighty combat with Darius,

Whom, from his chariot, flaming all with gems,

He hurl'd to earth, and catch'd the imperial crown.

'Twas not the shaft of love perform'd that feat;

He knew no Cupids then. Now, mark the change:

A brace of rival queens embroil the court;

And, while each hand is thus employ'd in beauty,

Where has he room for glory?

Heph. In his heart.

Cly. Well said, young minion!—I, indeed, forgot

To whom I spoke—But Sygambis comes.

Now is your time; for with her comes an idol

That claims homage—I'll attend the king. [Exit,

Enter Sygambis, with a Letter, and Parisatis.

Syg. Why will you wound me with your fond

compliments.

And urge a suit that I can never grant?

You know, my child, 'tis Alexander's will;

Here, he demands you for his lov'd Hephestion.

To disobey him might enflame his wrath,

And plunge our house in ruins yet unknown.

Par. To soothe this god, and charm him into tem-

Is there no victim, none but Parisatis? [per]

Must I be doom'd to wretchedness and woe,

That others may enjoy the conqueror's smiles?

Oh! if you ever lov'd my royal father—

And sure you did; your gushing tears proclaim it—

If still his name be dear, have pity on me!

He would not thus have forc'd me to despair;

Indeed he would not—Had I begg'd him thus,

He would have heard me, e'er my heart was broke.

Syg. When will my sufferings end! Oh, when, ye

For sixty rolling years, my soul has stood [goes]

The dread vicissitudes of fate unmov'd!

I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore yielded.
But this last trial, as it springs from folly,
Exceeds my suff'rance, and I must complain.

Lys. When Syfigambis mourns, no common woe
Can be the cause—~~is~~ misery indeed.

Yet, pardon, mighty queen, a wretched prince,
Who thus presumes to plead the cause of love.
Beyond my life, beyond the world [*Kneeling.*] I prize
Fair Parisatis—Hear me, I conjure you!
As you have authoriz'd Hephæstion's vows,
Reject not mine—grant me but equal leave
To serve the princess, and let love decide.

Heph. A blessing like the beauteous Parisatis,
Whole years of service, and the world's wide empire,
With all the blood that circles in our veins,
Can never merit; therefore, in my favour,
I begg'd the king to interpose his int'rest;
Therefore I beg'd your majesty's assistance:
Your word is past, and all my hopes rest on't.

Lys. [*Rising.*] Perish such hopes! for love's a ge-
nerous passion.

Which seeks the happiness of her we love,
Beyond th' enjoyment of our own desires;
Nor kings nor parents here have aught to do.
Love owns no influence, and disdains controul:
Let 'em stand neuter—'tis all I ask.

Heph. Such arrogance, did Alexander woo,
Would lose him all the conquests he has won.

Lys. To talk of conquests well becomes the man
Whose life and sword are but his rival's gift.

Sys. It grieves me, brave Lyfimachus, to find
My power fall short of my desires to serve you;
You know Hephæstion first declar'd his love,
And 'tis as true, I promis'd him my aid.
Your glorious king, his mighty advocate,
Became himself an humble suppliant for him.
Forget her, prince, and triumph o'er your passion;
A conquest worthy of a soul like thine.

Lys. Forget her, Madam! sooner shall the sun
Forget to shine, and tumble from his sphere.
Alas, the stream that circles thro' my heart,
Is, less than love, essential to my being!
Farewel, great queen—my honour now demands
That Alexander should himself explain
That wondrous merit which exalts his fav'rite,
And casts Lyfimachus at such a distance. [*Exit.*]

Sys. In this wild transport of ungovern'd passion,
Too far, I fear, he will incense the king—
Is Alexander, yet, my lord, arriv'd?

Heph. Madam, I know not; but Cassander comes;
He may, perhaps, inform us.

Sys. I would shun him.
Something there is, I know not why, that shocks me,
Something my nature shinks at, when I see him.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Cassander.

Cas. The face of day now blushes scarlet deep:
Now blackens into night. The louting sun,
As if the dreadful business he foreknew,
Drives heavily his fable chariot on. [*Thunder.*]
How fierce it lightens! how it thunders round me!
All nature seems alarm'd for Alexander.
Why be it so? Her pangs proclaim my triumph.
My soul's first wishes are to startle fate,
And strike amazement through the host of heav'n.
A mad Chaldean, with a flaming torch,
Came to my bed last night, and bellowing o'er me,
Well had it been, he cry'd, for Babylon,
If curst Cassander never had been born.

Enter Thessalus with a Packet.

How now, dear Thessalus, what packet's that?

Theff. From Macedon, a trusty slave just brought
Your father chides us for our cold delay; [*It.*]

He says, Craterus, by the king's appointment,
Comes, in his room, to govern Macedon;
Which nothing but the tyrant's death can hinder.
Therefore he bids us boldly strike,
Or quit our purpose, and confess our fears.

Cas. Is not his fate resolv'd? this night he dies;
And thus my father but forestalls my purpose.
How am I slow then? If I rode on thunder,
Wing'd as the lightning, it would ask some moments,
Ere I could blast the growth of this Colossus.

Theff. Mark where the haughty Polyperchon
Some new affront by Alexander given, [*comes!*]
Swells in his heart, and stings him into madness.

Cas. Now, now's our time; he must, he shall be
His haughty soul will kindle at his wrongs, [*ours!*]
Blaze into rage, and glory in revenge.

Enter Polyperchon.

Pol. Still as I pass, fresh murmurs fill my ears;
All talk of wrongs, and mutter their complaints.
Poor soul-less reptiles!—their revenge expires
In idle threats—the fortitude of cowards!
Their province is to talk! 'tis mine to act,
And shew this tyrant, when he dar'd to wrong me,
He wrong'd a man whose attribute is vengeance.

Cas. All nations bow their heads with servile ho-
And kiss the feet of this exalted man. [*mage,*]
The name, the shout, the blast from ev'ry mouth,
Is Alexander! Alexander stuns
The list'ning ear, and drowns the voice of heav'n.
The earth's commanders fawn like crouching spa-
And if this hunter of the barbarous world, [*niels;*]
But wind himself a god; all echo him,
With universal cry.

Pol. I fawn, or echo him!
Cassander, no! my soul disdains the thought!
Let eastern slaves, or prostituted Greeks,
Crouch at his feet; or tremble if he frown:
When Polyperchon can descend so low,
False to that honour, which through fields of death,
I still have courted where the fight was fiercest,
Be scorn my portion, infamy my lot.

Theff. The king may doom me to a thousand
tortures,

Ply me with fire, and rack me like Philotas,
Ere I shall stoop to idolize his pride!

Cas. Not Aristander, had he rais'd all hell,
Cou'd more have shock'd my soul, than thou hast
By the bare mention of Philotas' murder. [*Jone,*]
Oh! Polyperchon, how shall I describe it!

Did not your eyes rain blood to see the hero?
Did not your spirits burst with smothered vengeance,
To see thy noble fellow-warrior tortur'd?

Yet, without groaning, or a tear, endure
The torments of the damn'd? Oh, death to think it!
We saw him bruiz'd, we saw his bones laid bare;
His veins wide lac'd, and the poor quivering flesh
With fiery plincers from his bosom torn,
Till all beheld where the great heart lay panting.

Pol. Yet all like statues stood!—cold, lifeless sta-
As if the sight had froze us into marble. [*tues!*]
When, with collected rage, we should have flown
To instant vengeance on the ruthless cause,
And plung'd a thousand daggers in his heart.

Cas. At our last banquet, when the bowl had gone
The giddy round, and wine inflam'd my spirits,
I saw Craterus and Hephæstion enter
In Persian robes; to Alexander's health
They largely drank; and falling at his feet,
With impious adoration thus address'd
Their idol god. Hail, son of thund'ring Jove!
Hail, first of kings! young Ammon, live for ever!
Then kiss'd the ground; on which I laugh'd aloud,
And scoffing, ask'd 'em, why they kiss'd no h altar.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

5

Whereon the tyrant, starting from his throne,
Spurn'd me to earth, and stamping on my neck,
Learn thou to kiss it, was his fierce reply;
While with his foot he press'd me to the earth,
Till I lay weltring in a foam of blood.

Pol. Thus, when I mock'd the Persians that ador'd
He struck me on the face, [him,
And bid his guards chastise me like a slave.

But if he 'scape my vengeance, may he live,
Great as that god whose name he thus profanes,
And like a slave may I again be beaten,
Scold'd as I pass, and branded for a coward.

Cas. There spoke the spirit of Calisthenes.
Remember, he's a man, his flesh as penetrable

As any girl's, and wounded too as soon;
To give him death no thunders are requir'd.

Struck by a stone, young Jupiter has fall'n,
A sword has pierc'd him, and the blood has follow'd;
Water will drown him, or the fire will burn:

Nay, we have seen an hundred common ailments
Bring this immortal to the gates of death.

Pol. Oh, let us not delay the glorious business!
Our wrongs are great, and honour calls for vengeance.

—Are your hearts firm? *Pol.* As heav'n or hell can make 'em.

Pol. Take then my hand; and if you doubt my truth,
Rip up my breast, and lay my heart upon it.

Cas. While thus we join our hands and hearts to-
Remember Hermolaus and be hush'd. [gether,

Pol. Hush'd as the eve before an hurricane,
Or baleful planets when they shed their poisons.

Cas. This day exulting Babylon receives
The mighty robber—with him comes Roxana,

Fierce, haughty fair! On his return from India,
Artful she met him in the height of triumph,

And by a thousand wiles at Susa kept him,
In all the luxury of eastern revels.

Pol. How bore Statira his revolted love?
For, if I err not, ere the king espous'd her,

She made him promise to renounce Roxana.

Thest. No words can paint the anguish it occasion'd;
E'en Syngambis wept; while the wrong'd queen

Struck to the heart, fell lifeless on the ground,
And thus remain'd, spite of her care and cordials;

For an hour.

Cas. When the first tumult of her grief was laid,
I sought to fire her into wild revenge;

And to that end, with all the art I could,
Describ'd his passion for the bright Roxana.

But though I could not to my wish inflame her,
That far at least her jealousy will help;

She'll give him troubles that perhaps may end him,
And set the court in universal uproar.

But see, she comes. Our plots begin to ripen.
Now change the vizor, every one disperse,

And with a face of friendship meet the king.

[Exit.

Enter Syngambis, Statira, and Parisatis.
Sta. Oh, for a dagger, a draught of poison, flames!

Swell, heart! break, break, thou wretched, stubborn
Now, by the sacred fire, I'll not be held: [thing!

Why do you wish my life, yet stifle me for
Want of air—Pray, give me leave to walk.

Sy. Is there no reverence to my person due?
Trust me, Statira, had thy father liv'd,

Darius wou'd have heard me.

Sta. Oh! he's false.
This glorious man, this wonder of the world,
Is to his love, and ev'ry god foresworn.

Thy Alexander is renown'd for truth;
Above deceit—

Sta. Away, and let me die.
'Twas but my fondness, 'twas my easy nature

Wou'd have excus'd him—
Are not his falsehoods, and Statira's wrongs,

A subject canvass'd in the mouths of millions?
The babbling world can talk of nothing else!

Why, Alexander, why would'st thou deceive me!
Have I not lov'd thee, cruel as thou art!

Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fondness,
Bath'd 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my hair?

Whole nights I've sat and watch'd thee as a child,
Lull'd thy fierce pains, and sung thee to repose.

Par. If man can thus renounce the solemn ties
Of sacred love, who wou'd regard his vows?

Sta. Regard his vows! the monster, traitor! Oh,
I will forsake the haunts of men, converse

No more with aught that's human; dwell with daemons!
For since the sight of him is now unwelcome, [ness]

What has the world to give Statira joy?
Yet I must tell thee, perjur'd as he is,

Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,
The fragrant violet, or opening rose,

Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath.
Then he will talk—good gods, how he will talk!

He speaks the kindest words, and looks such things,
Vows with such passion, and swears with such

That it is heav'n to be deluded by him. [grace,
Sy. Her sorrows must have way.

Sta. Roxana then enjoys my perjur'd love;
Roxana clasps my monarch in her arms,

Doats on my conqueror, my dear lord, my king.
Oh, 'tis too much! by Heav'n I cannot bear it!

She clasps him all—She, the curst, happy she—
I'll die, or rid me of the burning torture.

Hear me; bright god of day, hear, ev'ry god.
Sy. Take heed, Statira; weigh it well, my child,

Ere desperate love enforces you to swear.
Sta. Oh, fear not that! already have I weigh'd it;

And in the presence here of Heav'n and you,
Renounce all converse with perfidious man.

Farewel, ye cozeners of our easy sex!
And thou, the falsest of the faithless kind,

Farewel, for ever! Oh, farewell! farewell!
If I but mention him the tears will flow.

How could'st thou, cruel, wrong a heart like mine,
Thus fond, thus dotting, e'en to madness, on thee!

Sy. Clear up thy griefs, thy Alexander comes,
Triumphant in the spoils of conquer'd India;

This day the hero enters Babylon.
Sta. Why, let him come: all eyes will gaze

with rapture;
All hearts will joy to see the victor pass,

All but the wretched, the forlorn Statira.
Sy. Wilt thou not see him, then?

Sta. I swear, and Heav'n be witness to my vow,
Never from this sad hour, never to see,

Nor speak; no, nor, if possible, to think
Of Alexander more: this is my vow,

And when I break it—
Sy. Do not ruin all!

Sta. May I again be perjur'd and deluded!
May furies rend my heart! may lightnings blast me!

Sy. Recall, my child, the dreadful imprecation.
Sta. No, I will publish it thro' all the court;

Then to the bow'rs of great Semiramis,
Retire for ever from the treacherous world.

There from man's sight will I conceal my woes,
And seek in solitude a calm repose.

Nor pray'rs, nor tears, shall my relieves controul,
Nor love itself, that tyrant of the soul. [Exit.

A C T II.

SCENE, a Triumphant Arch.

Cassander and Polyperchon.

Cas. **H**E comes, the headlong Alexander comes;
The gods forbid him Babylon in vain.

In vain, do prodigies foretell his fall:

Attended by a throng of scepter'd slaves,
This rapid conqueror of the ravag'd globe,
Makes his appearance, and defies the danger.

Pol. Why all this noise—ye partial powers de-
clare—

These starts of nature, at a tyrant's doom?
Is Alexander of such wondrous moment,
That heav'n should feel the wild alarms of fear,
And fate itself become a babbling for him?

Cas. Can't in the very arms we saw him wear,
The spirit of his father haunts the court,
In all the majesty of solemn sorrow.

The awful spectre fix'd his eyes upon me,
Wav'd his pale hand—and, threaten'd shook his head,
Groan'd out, Forbear—and vanish'd from my view.
A fear till then unknown possess'd my soul,
And sick'ning nature trembled at the sight!

Pol. Why should you tremble?—Had the yawn-
ing earth

Laid all the tortures of the damn'd before me,
My soul, unshaken in her firm resolve,
Wou'd brave those tortures, and pursue the tyrant.

Cas. Yes, Polyperchon, he this night shall die;
Our plate, in spite of prodigies, advance;
Success attends us.—Oh, it joys my soul!
To deal destruction like the hand of Heav'n,
Felt while unseen.

Pol. The Persians all dissatisfied appear;
Loudly they murmur at Statira's wrongs,
And fiercely censure Alexander's falsehood.

Cas. I know he loves Statira more than life;
And when he hears the solemn vow she made,
The oath that bars her from his sight for ever,
Remorse and horror will at once invade him,
Rend his wreck'd soul, and rush him into madness.

Pol. Of that anon—the court begins to thicken;
From ev'ry province of the wide-spread earth,
Ambassadors in Babylon are met;
As if mankind had previously agreed
To compliment the tyrant's boundless pride,
And hold a solemn synod of the world,
Where Alexander like a god should dictate.

Cas. We must away, or mingle with the crowd,
Adore this god till apt occasion calls,
To make him what he wou'd be thought—im-
mortal.

[Exeunt.]

A Symphony of Warlike Music.

Enter Clytus, and Aristander in his Robes.

Arist. Haste, reverend Clytus, haste and stop the
king.

Cly. Already is he enter'd, and the throng
Of princes that surround him is so great,
They keep at distance all that would approach.

Arist. Were he encircled by the gods themselves,
I must be heard, for death awaits his stay.

Cly. Then place yourself within his trumpet's
sound;

Shortly he'll appear.

[Exeunt.]

Enter Alexander in a Triumphant Car, drawn by black
Slaves. Trophies and warlike Ensigns in Proce-
sion before him. Clytus, Hephestion, Lyfimachus,
Aristander, Captives, Guards, and Attendants.

See, the conqu'ring hero comes,
Sound the trumpet, beat the drums;
Sports prepare, the laurel bring.
Songs of triumph to him sing.

See the godlike youth advance,
Breathe the flute, and lead the dance;
Myrtle wreath, and roses twine,
To deck the hero's brow divine.

Heph. Hail, son of Jove! great Alexander, hail!

Alex. Rise all; and thou, my second self, my
friend,

Oh, my Hephestion, raise thee from the earth!

Come to my arms, and hide thee in my heart;

Nearer, yet nearer, else thou lov'st me not.

Heph. Not done my king! bear witness, all ye
powers,

And let your thunder mail me to the centre.

If sacred friendship ever burn'd more brightly!

Immortal bosoms can alone admit

A flame more pure, more permanent than mine.

Alex. Thou dearest to me than my groves of laurel,

I know thou lov'st thy Alexander more

Than Clytus does the king.

Lys. Now for my fate!

I see that death awaits me—yet I'll on.

Dread Sir, I cast me at your royal feet.

Alex. Rise, my Lyfimachus; thy veins and mine,

From the same fountain have deriv'd their streams.

Rise to my arms, and let thy king embrace thee.

Is not that Clytus?

Cly. Your old faithful soldier.

Alex. Clytus, thy hand.—Thy hand, Lyfimachus,

Thus, double arm'd, methinks

I stand tremendous as the Lybian god,

Who, while his griefs and I quaff'd sacred blood,

Acknowledg'd me his coß. My lightning thou,

And thou my mighty thunder. I have seen

Thy glittering sword out-fly celestial fire;

And when I've try'd, Be gone and execute;

I've seen him run swifter than starting birds,

Nor bent the tender grass beneath his feet.

Lys. When fate invites, and Alexander leads,

Dangers and toils but animate the brave.

Cly. Perish the soldier, inglorious and despis'd,

Who starts from either when the king cries—on.

Alex. Oh, Clytus! Oh, my noble veteran!

'Twas, I remember, when I pass'd the Granicus,

His aim preserv'd me from unequal force.

When fierce Itanon and the bold Rhefaces,

Fell both upon me, with two mighty blows,

And clove my temper'd helmet quite asunder;

Then, like a god, flew Clytus to my aid;

Thy thunder struck Rhefaces to the ground,

And turn'd with ready vengeance on Itanon.

Cly. To your own deeds that victory you owe,

And sure your arms did never boast a nobler.

Alex. By Heav'n; they never did; they never can!

And I more glory to have pass'd that stream,

Than to have drove a million o'er the plain.

Can none remember? Yes, I know all must;

When glory, like the dazzling eagle, stood

Perch'd on my beaver in the Granick flood;

When fortune's self my standard trembling bore,

And the pale fates stood frighted on the shore;

When each immortal on the billows rode,

And I myself appear'd the leading god.

Arist. Haste, first of heroes, from this fatal place!

Far, far from Babylon; enjoy your triumph,

Or all the glories, which your youth has won,

Are blasted in their spring.

Alex. What mean thy fears?

And why that wild distraction on thy brow?

Arist. This morn, great king, I view'd the angry

And, frighted at the dismal prodigies,

To Orosmales for instruction flew;

But as I pray'd, deep echoing groans I heard,

And shrieks as of the damn'd that howl for sin.

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Look'd at the omen, while amas'd I lay,
In prostrate reverence, on the trembling floor,
Thus spoke the god:
The brightest glory of imperial man,
The pride of nations; and the boast of fame,
Remorseless fate in Babylon has doom'd
To sudden and irrevocable ruin.

Alex. If Heav'n ordains that Babylon must fall,
Can I prevent th' immutable decree?

Enter Perdiccas.

Per. Oh, horror! horror! Dreadful and portentous!

Alex. How now, Perdiccas, whence this exclamation?

Per. As Meleager and myself, this morn, [noise]
Led forth the Persian horse to exercise,
We heard a noise as of a rushing wind;
When suddenly a flight of hateful birds,
Like a thick cloud, obscur'd the face of heav'n;
On sounding wings from different parts they flew,
Escour'ring met, and battled in the air;
Their talons clash'd, their beaks gave mighty blows,
And showers of blood fell copious from their wounds.

Alex. Though all the curtains of the sky were drawn,

And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on;
While my Statira shines I cannot stray,
Love lifts his torch to light me on my way,
And her bright eyes create another day.

Lys. Vouchsafe, dread Sir, to hear my humble
A prince intreats it.

Alex. A soldier asks it, that's the noblest claim.

Lys. For all the services my sword has done;
Humbly I beg the princess Paristis.

Alex. Lysimachus, no more—it is not well.—
My word, you know, was to Hephæstion given.
How dare you then—

Lys. At your command to scale th' embattled
Or fetch the gore-dy'd standard from the foe, [wall]
When has Hephæstion flown with warmer zeal?
When did he leave Lysimachus behind?
These I have done, for these were in my pow'r;
But when you charge me to renounce my love,
And from my thoughts to banish Paristis;
Obedience there becomes impossible,
Nature revolts, and my whole soul rebels.

Alex. It does, brave Sir!—Now hear me; and be
When by my order curs'd Calisthenes [dumb]
Was as a traitor doom'd to live in torments,
Your pity sped him in despite of me.
Think not I have forgot your insolence;
No, though I pardon'd it.—Yet, if again
Thou dar'st to cross me with another crime,
The bolts of fury shall be doubled on thee.
In the mean time—think not of Paristis;
For if thou dost—by the immortal Ammon!
I'll not regard that blood of mine thou shar'st,
But use thee as the vilest Macedonian.

Lys. I knew you partial, ere I mov'd my suit;
Yet now, it shakes not my determin'd purpose;
While I have life and strength to wield a sword,
I never will forego the glorious claim.

Alex. Against my life: ha! traitor, was it so.
Thou saidst that I am rash, of hasty humour;
But I appeal to the immortal gods,
If ever petty, poor, provincial lord,
Had temper like to mine? My slave, whom I
Could tread to clay, dares utter bloody threats.

Cly. Forgive, dread Sir, the frantic warmth of love;
The noble prince, I read it in his eyes,
Would die a thousand deaths to serve his king,
And justify his loyalty and truth.

Lys. I meant his minion there, should feel my arm,
Love claims his blood, nor shall he live to triumph

In that destruction that awaits his rival.

Alex. I pardon thee, for my old Clytus' sake,
But if once more, thou mention thy rash love,
Or dar'st attempt Hephæstion's precious life,
I'll pour such storms of indignation on thee,
Philotas' rack, Calisthenes' disgrace,
Shall be delight to what thou shalt endure.

Cly. My lord, the aged queen, with Paristis,
Come to congratulate your safe arrival.

Enter Syfigambis and Paristis.

Alex. Oh, thou, the best of women, Syfigambis,
Source of my joy, blest parent of my love!

Sys. In humble duty to the gods and you,
Permit us, Sir, with gratitude to kneel.

Through you the royal house of Persia shines,
Rais'd from the depth of wretchedness and ruin,
In all the splendor of imperial greatness.
To meet me thus was generously done;
But still there wants, to crown my happiness,
That treasure of my soul, my dear Statira?
Had she but come to meet her Alexander,
I had been blest indeed.

Cly. Now who shall dare
To tell him of the queen's vow?

Alex. How fares

My love?—Ha! neither answer me! all silent!
A sudden horror, like a bolt of ice,
Shoots to my heart, and numbs the seat of life.

Heph. I would relate it, but my courage fails me.

Alex. Why stand you all as you were rooted here?

What, will none answer? my Hephæstion silent?
If thou hast any love for Alexander;
If ever I oblig'd thee by my care,
When through the field of death my eye has watch'd
thee,

Resolve my doubts, and rescue me from madness.

Heph. Your mourning queen has no disease but
Occasion'd by the jealous pangs of love. [grief]
She heard, dread Sir, (for what can 'scape a lover)
That you, regardless of your vows, at Susa,
Had to Roxana's charms resign'd your heart,
And revell'd in the joys you once forswore.

Alex. I own, the subtle sorceress, in my riot,
My reason gone, seduc'd me to her bed;
But when I wak'd, I shook the Circe off,
Though the enchantress held me by the arm,
And wept and gaz'd with all the force of love;
Nongrieved I leas for that which I had done,
Than when at Thais' suit, enrag'd with wine,
I set the fam'd Persepolis on fire.

Heph. Your queen Statira, in the rage of grief,
And agony of desperate love, has sworn,
Never to see your majesty again.

Alex. Oh, Madam, has she, has Statira sworn,
Never to see her Alexander more?
Impossible! she cou'd not, wou'd not swear it.
Is she not gentle as the guileless infant,
Mild as the genial breezes of the spring,
And softer than the melting sighs of love?

Par. With sorrow, Sir, I heard the solemn vow;
My mother heard it, and in vain adjur'd her,
By every tender motive, to recal it.

Sys. But with this fierceness she resents her wrongs,
Dwells on your fault, and heightens the offence,
That I could wish your majesty forget her.

Alex. Ha, could you wish me to forget Statira!
The star, which brightens Alexander's life,
His guide, by day, and goddess of his nights!
I feel her now; she beats in every pulse,
Throbs at my heart, and circles with my blood.

Sys. Have patience, son, and trust to Heav'n and
If my authority has any influence, [me]
I will exert it, and she shall be yours.

Alex. Haste, Madam, haste, if you would have me Fly, ere, for ever, she subjure the world, [live.
And stop the sad procession: [Exit Syf.] and, Parisa-
Hang thou about her, wash her feet with tears. [tis,
Nay, haste; the breath of gods, and eloquence
Of angels, go along with you. [Exit Par.
Oh, my heart!

Lys. Now let your majesty, who feels the pangs
Of disappointed love, reflect on mine.

Alex. Ha!

Cly. What, are you mad? Is this a time to plead!

Lys. The prop'riest time; he dares not now be partial.

Left Heav'n, in justice, should avenge my wrongs,
And double ev'ry pang which he feels now.

Alex. Why dost thou tempt me thus to thy un-
doing?

Death thou shouldst have, were it not courted so.
But know, to thy confusion, that my word,
Like destiny, admits of no repeal:
Therefore in chains shalt thou behold the nuptials
Of my Hephæstion.—Guards, take him prisoner.

[The Guards seize Lyfimachus.

Lys. Away, ye slaves, I'll not resign my sword,
Till first I've drench'd it in my rival's blood.

Alex. I charge you kill him not; take him alive;
The dignity of kings is now concern'd,
And I will find a way to tame this rebel.

Cly. Kneel—for I see rage lightning in his eyes.

Lys. I neither hope, nor will I sue for pardon;
Had I my sword and liberty again,
Again I would attempt his favourite's heart.

Alex. Hence, from my sight, and bear him to a
Perdiccas, give this lion to a lion; [dungeon.
None speak for him; fly; stop his mouth, away.

[Exit Lys. Per. and Guards.

Cly. This comes of women—the result of love.
'Tis folly all, 'tis frenzy and distraction;
Yet were I heated now with wine, I doubt
I should be preaching in this fool's behalf.

Alex. Come hither, Clytus, and my friend He-
Lend me your arms. [phestion;

I fear, betwixt Statira's cruel vows,
And fond Roxana's arts, your king will fall.

Cly. Better the race of women were destroyed,
And Persia sunk in everlasting ruin.

Heph. Look up, my lord, and bend not thus your
As if you purpos'd to forsake the world, [head,
Which you have greatly won.

Alex. Would I had not;

There's no true joy in such unweildy fortune.
Eternal gasps lasting troubles make;
All find my spots, but few observe my brightness.
Stand from about me all, and give me air!
Yes, I will shake this Cupid from my soul;
I'll fright the feeble god with war's alarms,
Or drown his pow'r in floods of hostile blood.
Grant me, great Mars, once more in arms to shine,
And break, like lightning, through th' embattled
Thro' fields of death to whirl the rapid car, [line;
And blaze amidst the thunder of the war,
Resistless as the bolt that rends the grove;
Or greatly perish, like the son of Jove, [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE, An Open Court. Trumpets sounding a
dead March. Lyfimachus led Prisoner. Eumenes,
Perdiccas, Parisatis, and Guards.

Par. STAY, my Lyfimachus! a moment stay!
Oh, whither art thou going!—Hold a mo-
ment!

Unkind! thou know'st my life was wrapt in thine
Why would'st thou then to worse than death
pose me?

Lys. Oh, may'st thou live in joys without alloy
Grant it, ye gods! a better fortune waits thee;
Live and enjoy it—'tis my dying wish.
While to the grave the lost Lyfimachus
Alone retires, and bids the world adieu.

Par. Even in that grave will Parisatis join thee
Yes, cruel man! not death itself shall part us;
A mother's pow'r, a sister's soft'ning tears,
With all the fury of a tyrant's frown,
Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss.

Lys. Were I to live till nature's self decay'd,
This wond'rous waste of unexampled love,
I never could repay.—Oh, Parisatis!
Thy charms might fire a coward into courage;
How must they act, then, on a soul like mine?
Defenceless and unarm'd, I fight for thee,
And may, perhaps, compel th' astonish'd world,
And force the king to own that I deserve thee.
Eumenes, take the prince's to thy charge;
Away, Perdiccas, all my soul's on fire. [Exit.

SCENE, the Palace.

Enter Roxana and Cassander.

Rox. Deserted! said'st thou? for a girl abandon'd
A puny girl, made up of watry elements!
Shall she embrace the god of my desires,
And triumph in the heart Roxana claims?

Cas. Oh, prince's! had you seen his wild despair
Had you beheld him when he heard her vow,
Words wou'd but wrong the agonies he felt:
He fainted thrice, and life seem'd fled for ever;
And when by our assiduous care recall'd,
He snatch'd his sword, and aim'd it at his breast,
Then rail'd at you with most unheard of curses.

Rox. If I forget it, may'st thou, Jove, deprive me
Of vengeance, make me the most wretched thing
On earth while living, and when dead, the lowest
Of the dead.

Cas. Oh, nobly said!

Just is the vengeance which inflames your soul;
Your wrongs demand it—but let reason govern;
This wild rage, else, may disappoint your aims.

Rox. Away, away, and give a whirlwind room;
Pride, indignation, fury, and contempt,
War in my breast, and torture me to madness.

Cas. Oh, think not I would check your boldest
flights;

No—I approve 'em, and will aid your vengeance.
But, prince's, let us chuse the safest course,
Or we may give our foes new cause of triumph,
Should they discover, and prevent our purpose.

Rox. Fear not, Cassander; nothing shall prevent it;
Roxana dooms him, and her voice is fate.
My soul, from childhood, has aspir'd to empire;
In early nonage I was us'd to reign
Among my she-companions; I despis'd
The trifling arts, and little wiles of women,
And taught 'em, with an Amazonian spirit,
To win the steed, to chase the foaming boat,
And conquer man, the lawless, charter'd savage.

Cas. Her words, her looks, her every motion fires
me!

Rox. But when I heard of Alexander's fame,
How with a handful, he had vanquish'd millions,
Spoil'd all the East, and captive held our queens;
Unconquer'd by their charms,
With heavenly pity he assuag'd their woes,
Dry'd up their tears, and sooth'd them into peace;
I hung, attentive, on my father's lips,
And wish'd him tell the wond'rous tale again.
No longer pleasing were my former sports;

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had it's turn, and all the woman reign'd.
 My solitary sighs heav'd in my breast,
 My glowing blushes crimson'd on my cheek;
 In my slumbers I have often mourn'd,
 In plaintive sounds, and murmur'd Alexander.

Caf. Curse on his name!—she doats upon him still.

Rox. At length, this conqueror to Zogdia came,
 And cover'd o'er with laurels, storm'd the city:

Caf. Oh! Cassander! where shall I find words
 To paint th' extatic transports of my soul!

When, midst a circle of unrivall'd beauties,
 I saw myself distinguish'd by the hero.

With artless rapture I receiv'd his vows,
 The warmest, sure, that ever lover breath'd,

Of fervent love, and everlasting truth.

Caf. And need you then be told, those times are
 Now engross'd all his thoughts: [past]

The Persian queen, without a rival, reigns
 His mistress of his heart—nor can thy charms,

The brightest, sure, that ever woman boasted,
 Erase all his vows of everlasting love,

And drive Roxana from disdain and insult.

Rox. Oh, thou hast rous'd the lion in my soul!

Shall the daughter of Darius hold him?

No, 'tis resolv'd; I will resume my sphere,
 Oh, failing, spread a general ruin round me.

Roxana and Statira; they are names
 That must for ever jar,

When they encounter, thunders must ensue.

Caf. Behold, she comes, in all the pomp of sorrow,
 Determin'd to fulfil her solemn vow! [They retire.

Enter Syfigambis and Statira.

Rox. Away, and let us mark th' important scene.

Syf. Oh, my Statira, how has passion chang'd thee!

Think, in the rage of disappointed love,

How treated thus, and hurried to extremes,

What Alexander may denounce against us;

Against the poor remains of lost Darius.

Stat. Oh, fear not that! I know he will be kind,
 For my sake kind, to you and Parisatis.

Tell him, I rail'd not at his falsehood to me,

But with my parting breath spoke kindly of him;

Tell him I wept at our divided loves,

And, sighing, sent a last forgiveness to him.

Syf. No, I can ne'er again presume to meet him,
 Never approach the much-wrong'd Alexander,

If thou refuse to see him—Oh, Statira!

Thy aged mother, and thy weeping country,

Claim thy regard, and challenge thy compassion:

Hear us, my child, and list us from despair.

Stat. Thus low, I cast me at your royal feet,
 To bathe them with my tears; or, if you please,

I'll let out life, and wash 'em with my blood:

But I conjure you not to rack my soul,

Nor hurry my wild thoughts to perfect madness:

Should now Darius' awful ghost appear,

And you, my mother, stand beseeching by,

I would persist to death, and keep my vow.

Rox. This fortitude of soul compels my wonder.

Syf. Hence, from my sight! ungrateful wretch,

Hence, to some desert, [be gone]

And hide thee where bright virtue never shone;

For, in the sight of Heaven, I here renounce,

And cast thee off an alien to my blood.

[Exit Syfigambis.]

Roxana comes forward.

Rox. Forgive, great queen, th' intrusion of a

With grief Roxana sees Statira weep; [stranger;

I've heard, and much applaud your fix'd resolve,

To quit the world for Alexander's sake;

And yet I fear, so greatly he adores you,

That he will rather chuse to die of sorrow,

Than live for the despis'd Roxana's charms.

Stat. Spare, Madam, spare your counterfeited
 fears;

You know your beauty, and have prov'd it's pow'r:

Tho' humbly born, have you not captive held,

In love's soft chains, the conqueror of the world!

Away to libertines, and boast thy conquest;

A shameful conquest. In his hours of riot,

Then, only then, Roxana could surprise

My Alexander's heart.

Rox. To some romantic grove's sequester'd gloom,

Thy sickly virtue wou'd, it seems, retire,

To shun the triumphs of a favour'd rival.

In vain thou fly'st—for there, e'en there I'll haunt

thee;

Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night:

There shalt thou hear, in what extatic joys

Roxana revels with the first of men;

And, as thou hear'st the rapt'rous scene recited,

With frantic jealousy thou'lt madly curse

Thy own weak charms, that could not fix the rover.

Stat. How weak is woman! At the storm she

shrinks,

Dreads the drawn sword, and trembles at the thunder;

Yet when strong jealousy inflames her soul,

The sword may glitter, and the tempest roar,

She scorns the danger, and provokes her fate.

Rival, I thank thee—Thou hast fir'd my soul,

And rais'd a storm beyond thy pow'r to lay;

Soon shalt thou tremble at the dire effects,

And curse, too late, the folly that undid thee.

Rox. Sure the disdain'd Statira dares not mean it!

Stat. By all my hopes of happiness, I dare:

And know, proud woman, what a mother's threats,

A sister's sighs, and Alexander's tears,

Could not effect, thy rival rage has done.

My soul, that starts at breach of oaths begun,

Shall, to thy ruin, violated run;

I'll see the king, in spite of all I swore,

Tho' curs'd, that thou may'st never see him more.

Enter Alexander, Hephestion, Clytus, &c.

Alex. Oh, my Statira!—thou relentless fair!

Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them.

What shall I say to work upon thy soul?

What words, what looks, can melt thee to forgiveness?

Stat. Talk of Roxana, and the conquer'd Indies;

Thy great adventures, and successful love,

And I will listen to the rapt'rous tale;

But rather shun me, shun a desperate wretch,

Resign'd to sorrow, and eternal woe.

Alex. Oh, I could die! with transport, die be-

fore thee!

Wouldst thou but, as I lay convuls'd in death,

Cast a kind look, or drop a tender tear.

Say but, 'twas pity, one so fam'd in arms,

One who has 'scap'd a thousand deaths in battle,

For the first fault, should fall a wretched victim

To jealous anger, and offended love.

Rox. Am I then fall'n so low in thy esteem,

That for another thou would'st rather die,

Than live for me?—How am I alter'd, tell me,

Since last at Susa, with repeated oaths,

You swore the conquest of the world afford'd

Less joy, less glory, than Roxana's love!

Alex. Take, take that conquer'd world, dispose

of crowns,

And canton out the empires of the globe;

But leave me, Madam, with repentant tears,

And undisssembled sorrows, to atone

The wrongs I've offer'd to this injur'd excellence.

Rox. Yes, I will go, ungrateful as thou art!

Bane to my life, and murder of my peace;

I will be gone; this last disdain has cur'd me.
But have a care—I warn you not to trust me;
Or, by the gods, that witness to thy peccaries,
I'll raise a fire that shall consume you both,
Tho' I partake the ruin.

[Exit.]

Enter Syfigambis.

Sta. Alexander!—Oh, is it possible?
Immortal gods! can guilt appear so lovely?
Yet, yet I pardon, I forgive thee all.
Alex. Forgive me all! Oh, catch the heavenly
sounds!

Catch 'em, ye winds, and, as you fly, disperse
The rapt'rous tidings thro' th' extended world,
That all may share in Alexander's joy!

Sta. Yes, dear deceiver, I forgive thee all,
But longer dare not hear thy charming tongue;
For while I hear thee, my resolves give way:
Be therefore quick, and take thy last farewell;
Farewell, my love—Eternally farewell!

Alex. Oh, my Hephæstion! bear me, or I sink.
—Why, why Statira, will you use me thus?
I know the cause, my working brain divines it:
You say you've pardon'd, but with this reserve,
Never again to bless me with your love,

Sta. All-seeing Heav'n support me!

Alex. Speak to me, love! tho' banishment and
death

Hang on thy lips, yet while thy tongue pronounces,
The music will awhile suspend my pains,
And mitigate the horrors of despair.
Oh, could I see you thus!

Sta. His sorrows wound my heart,
Sorrow piteous, and I again must love him:
But I have sworn, and therefore cannot yield.

Alex. Go then, inhuman, triumph in my pains,
Feed on the pangs that rend this wretched heart;
For now 'tis plain you never lov'd. Statira!
Oh, I could sound that charming, cruel name,
Till the tir'd echo faint with repetition;
Till all the breathless groves, and quiet myrtles,
Shook with my sighs, as if a tempest bow'd 'em.
My tongue could dwell for ever on that name.
Statira! Oh, Statira!

Sta. Such was his looks, so melting was his voice,
Such his soft sighs, and his deluding tears,
When with that pleasing, perjur'd breath avowing,
His whispers trembled thro' my credulous ears,
And told the story of my utter ruin.
Gods! if I say, I shall again believe.
Farewell, thou greatest pleasure, greatest pain.

Alex. I charge ye, stay her—
Oh, turn thee, thou bewitching brightness, turn;
Hear my last words, and see my dying pangs!
Lo! at your feet, behold, a monarch falls,
A prince, who gave the conquer'd world to thee,
And thought thy love bought cheaply with the gift;
Whose glories, laurels, bloom but in thy smiles,
Now shrunk and blasted by thy cruel hate,
Untimely falls. Yet, oh! when thou shalt die,
May death be mild, as thou art cruel now;
And may thy beauties gently sink to earth,
While circling angels wait thee to repose.

Syf. Art thou turn'd savage? Is thy heart of mar-
But if this posture move thee not to pity, [Exit.]
I never will speak more.

Alex. Oh, my Statira!
I swear, my queen, I'll not out-live our parting,
My soul grows still as death. Say, wilt thou pardon?
'Tis all I ask. Wilt thou forgive the transports
Of a deep-wounded heart, and all is well?

Sta. Rise! and may Heav'n forgive you, like
Statira.

Alex. You are too gracious—Clytus, bear me
hence.

When I am laid i' th' earth, yield her the world.
There's something here, that heaves as cold as ice,
That stops my breath. Farewel, farewell for ever!

Sta. Hold off, and let me run into his arms;
My life, my love, my lord, my Alexander!
In thy Statira's love can give thee joy,
Revive, and be immortal as the gods.

Alex. My fluttering heart, tumultuous with its bliss,
Would leap into thy bosom; 'tis too much.
Oh, let me press thee in my eager arms,
And strain thee hard to my transported breast!

Sta. But shall Roxana

Alex. Let her not be nam'd.

Oh, Madam! how shall I repay your goodness?—
And you, my fellow-warriors, who could grieve
For your lost king? But talk of griefs no more;
The banquet waits, and I invite you all.
My equals in the throne, as in the grave,
Without distinction come, and share my joy.

Cly. Excuse me, Sir, if I for once, am absent.

Alex. Excuse thee, Clytus! None shall be excus'd.
All revel out the day, 'tis my command.
Gay as the Persian god, ourself will stand,
With a crown'd goblet in our lifted hand;
Young Amition and Statira shall go round,
While antic measures beat the burden'd ground,
And to the vaulted skies our trumpets clangors
sound. [Exit.]

A C T IV.

Enter Clytus, Hephæstion, and Eumenes.

Cly. URG E me no more; I hate the Persian dress,
Nor should the King be angry at the
rev'rence

I owe my country—sacred are her customs,
And honest Clytus will to death observe 'em.
Oh! let me rot in Macedonian rags,
Or, like Callisthenes, be cag'd for life,
Rather than shine in fashions of the East.

Eum. Let me, brave Clytus, as a friend, intreat
you.

Heph. What virtue is there that adorns a throne,
Exalts the heart, and dignifies the man,
Which shines not brightly in our royal master?
And yet perversely you'll oppose his will,
And thwart an innocent, unhurtful humour.

Cly. Unhurtful! Oh! 'tis monstrous affection!
Pregnant with venom, in its nature black,
And not to be excus'd!—Shall man, weak man,
Exact the rev'rence which we pay to Heaven,
And bid his fellow-creatures kneel before him,
And yet be innocent? Hephæstion, no;
The pride that lays a claim to adoration,
Insults our reason, and provokes the gods.

Eum. Yet what was Jove, the god whom we adore!
Was he not once a man, and rais'd to Heaven
For gen'rous acts, and virtues more than human?

Heph. By all his thunder, and his sov'reign power,
I'll not believe the world yet ever felt
An arm like Alexander's.—Not that god
You nam'd, tho' riding in a car of fire,
Could in a shorter space do greater deeds;
Or more effectually have taught mankind,
To bend submissive, and confess his sway.

Cly. I tell you, Boy, that Clytus loves the king
As well as you, or any soldier here;
Yet I disdain to soothe his growing pride:

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

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The hero charms me, but the god offends.

Heph. Then go not to the banquet.

Cly. Why, I was bid,
Young minion, was I not, as well as you?
I'll go, my friend, in this old habit, thus,
And laugh, and drink the king's health heartily;
And while you, blushing, bow your heads to earth,
And hide them in the dust—I'll stand erect,
Straight as a spear, the pillar of my country,
And be by so much nearer to the gods.

Heph. But see, the king appears.

*Enter Alexander, Statira, Syfigambis, Parisatis,
and Attendants.*

Par. Oh, gracious monarch!

Spare him! oh, spare Lyfimachus's life!

I know you will—the brave delight in mercy. [rows.

Alex. Shield me, Statira, shield me from her sor-

Par. Save him! oh, save him, 'ere it be too late!

Speak the kind word, let not your soldier perish,

For one rash action, by despair occasion'd.

I'll follow thus, for ever on my knees;

You shall not pass.—Statira! oh, intreat him!

Alex. Oh, Madam! take her, take her from about
Her streaming eyes assail my very soul, [me:

And shake my best resolves.

Sta. Did I not break

Thro' all for you? Nay, now, my lord, you must.

By all th' obedience I have paid you long,

By all your passion, sighs, and tender looks,

Oh! save a prince, whose only crime is love.

Sy. I had not join'd in this bold suit; my son,

But that it adds new lustre to your honours.

Alex. Honour! what's that? Has not Statira said

Were I the king of the blue firmament, [it!

And the bold Titans should again make war,

Tho' my resistless thunders were prepar'd,

By all the gods, the should arrest my arm,

Uplifted to destroy them. Fly, Hephestion,

Fly, Clytus; snatch him from the jaws of death,

And to the royal banquet bring him straight,

Bring him in triumph, fit for loads of honour.

[*Exeunt Hephestion, &c.*

Sta. Why are you thus, beyond expression, kind?

Oh, my lord! my raptur'd heart,

By gratitude and love at once inflam'd,

With wild emotion flutters in my breast;

Oh, teach it, then, instruct it how to thank you!

Alex. Excellent woman!

'Tis not in nature to support such joy.

Sta. Go, my best love; unbend you at the banquet;

Indulge in joy, and laugh your cares away;

While, in the bowers of great Semiramis,

I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,

And crown it as the altar of our loves,

Where I will lay me down, and softly mourn,

But never close my eyes, till you return. [*Ex. Sta.*

Alex. Is the not more than mortal can desire;

As Venus lovely, and as Dian chaste?

And yet, I know not why, our parting shocks me;

A ghastly paleness sat upon her brow;

Her voice, like dying echoes, fainter grew;

And as I wrung her by the rosy fingers,

Methought the strings of my great heart were crack'd.

What could it mean!—Forward, Leomachus.

Enter Roxana, Cassander, and Polyperchon.

Why, Madam, gaze you thus?

Rox. For a last look,

And to imprint the memory of my wrongs,

Roxana's wrongs, on Alexander's mind.

Alex. On to the banquet. [*Ex. Alex. &c.*

Rox. Ha! with such disdain!

So unconcern'd! Oh, I could tear myself,

Him, you, and all the hateful world, to atoms!

Cas. Still keep this spirit up, preserve it still,

And know us for your friends. We like your rage;

Here, in the sight of Heav'n, Cassander swears,

Unaw'd by death, to second your revenge.

Speak but the word, and, swift as thought can fly,

The tyrant falls a victim to your fury.

Rox. Shall he then die? Shall I consent to kill him?

I, that have lov'd him with that eager fondness,

Shall I consent to have him basely murder'd,

And see him clasp'd in the cold arms of death?

No, Cassander,

Worlds should not tempt me to the deed of horror.

Pol. The weak fond scruples of your love might

pass,

Was not the empire of the world concern'd:

But, Madam, think, when time shall teach his

tongue,

How will the glorious infant, which you bear,

Arraign his partial mother, for refusing

To fix him on the throne which here we offer?

Cas. If Alexander lives, you cannot reign,

Nor will your child. Old Syfigambis plans

Your sure destruction. Boldly, then, prevent her;

Give but the word, and Alexander dies.

Pol. Not he alone, the Persian race shall bleed.

At your command, one universal ruin,

Shall, like a deluge, overwhelm the eastern world,

I'll gloriously we raise you to the throne.

Rox. But till the mighty ruin be accomplish'd,

Where can Roxana fly th' avenging arms

Of those who must succeed this godlike man?

Cas. Would you vouchsafe, in these expanded arms

To seek a refuge, what could hurt you here?

There you might reign with undiminish'd lustre,

Queen of the East, and empress of my soul.

Rox. Disgrac'd Roxana! whither art thou fallen!

Till this curs'd hour, I never was unhappy:

There's not one mark of former majesty,

To awe the slave that offers at my honour.

Cas. Impute not, Madam, my unbounded passion

To want of reverence—I have lov'd you long.

Rox. Peace, villain, peace, and let me hear no more.

Think't thou I'd leave the bosom of a god,

And stoop to thee, thou moving piece of earth?

Hence, from my sight, and never more presume

To meet my eyes; for, mark me, if thou dar'st,

To Alexander I'll unfold thy treason:

Whose life, in spite of all his wrongs to me,

Shall still be sacred, and above thy malice.

Cas. By your own life, the greatest oath, I swear,

Cassander's passion from this hour is dumb;

And, as the best atonement I can make,

Statira dies, the victim of your vengeance.

Rox. Cassander, rise; 'tis ample expiation.

Yes, rival, yes—this night shall be thy last.

This night, I know, is destin'd for thy triumph,

And gives my Alexander to thy arms.

Oh, murder's thought!

Pol. The bow'rs of great Semiramis are made

The scene of love; Perdiccas holds the guard.

Cas. Now is your time. While Alexander revels,

And the whole court re-echoes with his riot,

To end her, and with her to end your fears.

Give me but half the Zogdian slaves that wait you,

And deem her dead. Nor shall a soul escape,

That serves your rival, to disperse the news.

Rox. By me they die, Perdiccas and Statira;

Hence with thy aid, I neither ask nor want it,

But will myself conduct the slaves to battle.

Were she to fall by any arm but mine,

Weil might the murmur, and arraign her stars;

B 2

'Tis life well lost to die by my command.

Rival, rejoice, and, pleas'd, resign thy breath,
Roxana's vengeance grants thee noble death. [Exit.

Cas. All but her Jove, this Semele disdains.
We must be quick—She may, perhaps, betray
The great design, and frustrate our revenge.

Pol. Has Philip got instructions how to act?

Cas. He has, my friend; and, faithful to our cause,
Resolves to execute the fatal order.

Bear him this phial—it contains a poison
Of that exalted force, that deadly nature,
Should Æsculapius drink it, in five hours
(For then it works) the god himself were mortal.

I drew it from Nonacris' horrid spring;
Mix'd with his wine, a single drop gives death,
And sends him howling to the shades below.

Pol. I know it's power, for I have seen it try'd;
Pains of all sorts, thro' every nerve and artery
At once it scatters—burns at once, and freezes,
Till, by extremity of torture forc'd,
The soul consents to leave her joyless home,
And seek for ease in worlds unknown to this.

Cas. Now let us part: with Theſſalus and Philip
Haste to the banquet—till his second call,
Let this be given him, and it crowns our hopes.
Now, Alexander, now, we'll soon be quits;
Death for a blow, is interest indeed. [Exeunt.

SCENE, the Palace.

Alexander, Perdiccas, Cassander, Polyperchon, Eumenes, discovered at a Banquet, &c.

[A flourish of Trumpets.]

Alex. To our immortal health, and our fair queen's:
All drink it deep; and while the bowl goes round,
Mars and Bellona join to make us music.
A thousand bulls be offer'd to the sun,
White as his beams: speak the big voice of war;
Beat all our drums, and sound our silver trumpets;
Provoke the gods to follow our example,
In bowls of nectar, and replying thunder.

[Flourish of Trumpets.]

Enter Clytus, Hephestion, and Lyſimachus bloody.

Cly. Long live the king; long live great Alexander;
And conquest crown his arms with deathless laurels,
Propitious to his friends, and all he favours.

Alex. Did I not give command you should preserve
Lyſimachus?

Hepb. Dread Sir, you did.

Alex. What, then,

Portend these bloody marks?

Hepb. Ere we arriv'd,

Perdiccas had already plac'd the prince
In a lone court, all but his hands unarm'd.

Cly. On them were gauntlets; such was his desire,
In death to shew the difference betwixt
The blood of Eacus and common men.
Forth issuing from his den, amaz'd we saw
The horrid savage, with whose hideous roar
The palace shook. His angry eye-balls glaring,
With triple fury, menac'd death and ruin.

Hepb. With unconcern the gallant prince advanc'd:
Now, Parisatis, be the glory thine,
But mine the danger, were his only words;
For, as he spoke, the furious beast descried him,
And rush'd outrageous to devour his prey.

Cly. Agile and vigorous, he avoids the shock
With a slight wound; and, as the lion turn'd,
Thrust gauntlet, arm and all, into his throat,
And, with Herculean strength, tears forth the tongue:
Foaming and bloody, the disabled savage
Sunk to the earth, and plough'd it with his teeth;
While, with an active bound, your conqu'ring soldier,
Leap'd on his back, and dash'd his skull in pieces.

Alex. By all my laurels, 'twas a godlike act;

And 'tis my glory, as it shall be thine,
That Alexander could not pardon thee.

Oh, my brave soldier! think not all the pray'rs
And tears of the lamenting queens could move me
Like what thou hast perform'd; grow to my breast.

Lyf. Thus, self-condemn'd, and conscious of my
guilt,

How shall I stand such unexampled goodness?

Oh, pardon, Sir, the transports of despair,
The frantic outrage of ungovern'd love!
Even when I shew'd the greatest want of reverence,
I could have died, with rapture, in your service.

Alex. Lyſimachus, we both have been transported;
But, from this hour, be certain of my heart.

A lion be the impress of thy shield,
And that gold armour we from Porus won,
Thy king presents thee—But thy wounds ask rest.

Lyf. I have no wounds, dread Sir: or, if I had,
Were they all mortal, they should stream unminced,
When Alexander was the glorious health.

Alex. Thy hand, Hephestion. Clasp him to thy
And wear him ever near thee. Parisatis [heart,

Shall now be his who serves me best in war.
Neither reply, but mark the charge I give:
Live, live as friends—You will, you must, you shall.

'Tis a god gives you life.

Cly. Oh, monstrous vanity!

Alex. Ha! what says Clytus? Who am I?

Cly. The son

Of good King Philip.

Alex. By my kindred gods,

'Tis false. Great Ammon gave me birth.

Cly. I've done.

Alex. Clytus, what means that dress? Give him
Take it, and wear it. [a robe there,

Cly. Sir, the wine, the weather

Has heated me; besides, you know my humour.

Alex. Oh, 'tis not well! I'd rather perish, burn,
Than be so singular and froward.

Cly. So would I—

Burn, hang, drown, but in a better cause.

I'll drink or fight for sacred majesty

With any here. Fill me another bowl,

Will you excuse me?

Alex. You will be excus'd.

But let him have his humour; he is old.

Cly. So was your father, Sir; this to his memory.

Sound all the trumpets there.

Alex. They shall not sound

Till the king drinks. Sure, I was born to wage

Eternal war. All are my enemies,

Whom I could tame—But let the sports go on.

Lyf. Nay, Clytus, you that could advise so well—

Alex. Let him persist, be positive, and proud,

Envious and sullen 'mongst the nobler souls,

Like an infernal spirit that hath stole

From hell, and mingled with the mirth of gods.

Cly. When gods grow hot, no difference I know

'Twixt them and devils—Fill me Greek wine—yet,

Yet fuller—I want spirits.

Alex. Let me have music.

Cly. Music for boys—Clytus would hear the groan

Of dying soldiers, and the neigh of steeds;

Or, if I must be pester'd with shrill sounds,

Give me the cries of matrons in sack'd towns.

Hepb. Let us, Lyſimachus, awake the king;

A heavy gloom is gathering on his brow.

Kneel all, with humblest adoration kneel,

And let a health to Jove's great son go round.

Alex. Sound, sound, that all the universe may
hear. [A loud flourish of trumpets.]

Oh, for the voice of Jove, the world should know

The kindness of my people.—Rise. Oh, rise,

My hands, my arms, my heart, are ever yours.

Cly. I did not kiss the earth, nor must your
I am unworthy, Sir. [hand—

Alex. I know thou art:

Thou enviest the great honour of thy master.—

Sit, all my friends. Now let us talk of war;

The noblest subject for a soldier's mouth;

And speak, speak freely, else you love me not.—

Who, think you, was the greatest general

That ever led an army to the field?

Heph. A chief so great, so fortunately brave,

And justly so renown'd as Alexander,

The radiant sun, since first his beams gave light,

Never yet saw.

Lyf. Such was not Cyrus, or the fam'd Alcides,

Nor great Achilles, whose tempestuous sword

Laid Troy in ashes, though the warring gods

Oppos'd him.

Alex. Oh, you flatter me!

Cly. They do indeed; and yet you love 'em for't;

But hate old Clytus for his hardy virtue.

Come, shall I speak a man, with equal bravery,

A better general, and experter soldier?

Alex. I should be glad to learn: instruct me, Sir,

Cly. Your father, Philip.—I have seen him march,

And fought beneath his dreadful banner, where

The boldest at this table would have trembled.

Nay, frown not, Sir, you cannot look me dead.

When Greeks join'd Greeks, then was the tug of

war,

The labour'd battle sweat, and conquest bled.

Why should I fear to speak a bolder truth

Than e'er the lying priests of Ammon told you?

Philip fought men, but Alexander women.

Alex. All envy, spite and envy, by the gods!

Is then my glory come to this at last,

To conquer women! Nay, he said the stoutest,

The stoutest here wou'd tremble at his dangers.

In all the sickness, all the wounds I bore,

When from my reins the javelin's head was cut,

Lyfianachus, Hephæstion—speak, Perdiccas,

Did I once tremble? Oh, the cursed falsehood!

Did I once shake or groan; or act beneath

The dauntless resolution of a king?

Lyf. Wine has transported him.

Alex. No, 'tis mere malice.

I was a woman, too, at Oxydrace,

When, planting on the wall's a scaling ladder,

I mounted, spight of show'rs of stones, bars, ar-

rows,

And all the lumber which they thunder'd down;

When you beneath, cry'd out, and spread your arms,

That I should leap among you. Did I so?

Lyf. Dread Sir, the old man knows not what he

says.

Alex. Was I a woman, when, like Mercury,

I leap'd the walls and flew amidst the foe;

And, like a baited lion, dy'd myself

All over in the blood of those bold hunters;

Till, spent with toil, I battled on my knees.

Pluck'd forth the darts, that made my shield a forest,

And hurl'd 'em back with most unconquer'd fury?

Then, shining in my arms, I sun'd the field;

Mov'd, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war.

Cly. 'Twas all bravado. For, before you leap'd,

You saw that I had burst the gates asunder.

Alex. Oh, that thou wert but once more young

and vigorous,

That I might strike thee prostrate to the earth,

For this audacious lye, thou feeble dotard.

Cly. I know the reason, why you use me thus.

I sav'd you from the sword of bold Rhæfæces,

Else had your godship slumber'd in the dust;

And most ungratefully you hate me for it.

Alex. Hence from the banquet. Thus far I for-
give thee.

Cly. First try (for none can want forgiveness more)

To have your own bold blasphemies forgiven,

The shameful riots of a vicious life;

Philotas' murder.

Alex. Ha! what said the traitor?

Heph. Clytus, withdraw—Eumenes, force him
hence.

He must not tarry. Drag him to the door.

Cly. No; let him send me, if I must be gone,

To Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes,

To great Parmenio, and his slaughter'd sons.

Alex. Give me a javelin.

Heph. Hold, mighty Sir.

Alex. Sirrah! off,

Left I at once strike through his heart and thine.

Lyf. Oh, sacred Sir, have but a moment's pa-
tience!

Alex. What! Hold my arms? I shall be mur-
der'd here,

Like poor Darius, by my barb'rous subjects.—

Perdiccas, sound our trumpets to the camp;

Call all my soldiers to the court. Nay, haste;

For there is treason plotting 'gainst my life,

And I shall perish ere they come to save me.

Where is the traitor?

Cly. Sure there's none amongst us,

But here I stand—honest Clytus!

Whom the king invited to the banquet.

Alex. Be gone to Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes,

[Stabs him.

And let bold subjects learn by thy example,

Not to provoke the patience of their prince.

Cly. The rage of wine is drown'd in gushing blood.

—Oh, Alexander, I have been to blame!

Hate me not after death: For I repent,

That I so far have urg'd your noble nature.

Alex. What's this I hear! Say on, my dying
soldier.

Cly. I should have kill'd myself, had I but liv'd

To be once sober.—Now I fall with honour;

My own hands wou'd have brought foul death.—

Oh, pardon!

Alex. Then I am lost: what has my vengeance
done!

Who is it thou hast slain? Clytus! what was he?

The faithfullest subject, worthiest counsellor,

The bravest soldier, he who sav'd thy life,

Fighting bare-headed at the river Granick,

And now he has a noble recompence;

For a rash word spoke in the heat of wine,

The poor, the honest Clytus, thou hast slain.

Clytus, thy friend, thy guardian, thy preserver.

Heph. Remove the body, it inflames his sorrow.

Alex. None dare to touch him: we must never

Cruel Hephæstion and Lyfianachus, [part.—

That had the power, yet would not hold me. Oh!

Lyf. Dear, Sir, we did.

Alex. I know ye did; ye held me

Like a wild beast, to let me go again

With greater violence. Oh, ye've undone me!

Excuse it not; you that cou'd stop a lion,

Cou'd not turn me: ye should have drawn your

swords,

And barr'd my rage with their advancing points;

Made reason glitter in my dazzled eyes,

Till I had seen the precipice before me:

That had been noble, that had shewn the friend;

Clytus wou'd so have done, to save your lives.

Lyf. When men shall hear how highly you were
urg'd—

Alex. No; you have let me stain my rising glory,
Which else had ended brighter than the sun.

Oh, I am all a blot, which seas of tears,
And my heart's blood, can never wash away;
Yet 'tis but just I try, and on the point,
Still reeking, hurl my black polluted breast.

Heph. Oh, sacred Sir—it shall not—must not be.

Lys. Forgive, dread Sir—Forgive my pious hands,
That dare, in duty, to disarm my master.

Alex. Yes, cruel men, ye now can shew your
strength;

Here's not a slave, but darts oppose my justice,
Yet none had courage to prevent this murder;
But I will render all endeavours vain,
That tend to save my life—Here will I lie.

[Falls on Clytus.

Close to my murder'd soldier's bleeding side.
Thus clasping his cold body in my arms,
Till death, like his, has clos'd my eyes for ever.

Enter Perdiccas.

Per. Treason! foul treason! Hephæstion, where's
the king?

Heph. There, by old Clytus' side, whom he hath
slain.

Per. Rise, sacred Sir, and haste to save the queen.
Roxana, fill'd with furious jealousy,
Came with a guard, unmark'd: she gain'd the bow'r,
And broke upon me with such sudden fury,
That all have perish'd who oppos'd her rage.

Alex. What says Perdiccas? Is the queen in danger?

Per. Haste, Sir, or she dies.

Alex. Thus from the grave I rise to save my love.
All draw your swords, on wings of lightning move;
Young Ammon leads you, and the cause is love;
When I trust on, sure none will dare to stay.

*The beauty calls, and glory leads the way. [Exeunt.

ACT V.

SCENE, the Tower of Basmiramis.

Statira discovered asleep.

Sta. BLESS me, ye pow'rs above, and guard
my virtue!

Where are you fled, dear shades? Where are you fled?

'Twas but a dream, and yet I saw and heard
My royal parents, who, while pious care
Sat on their faded cheeks, pronounc'd with tears,
Tears such as angels weep, this hour my last.
But hence with fear—my Alexander comes,
And fear and danger ever fled from him.
Wou'd that he were here!

For, oh! I tremble, and a thousand terrors
Rush in upon me, and alarm my heart.

But hark, 'tis he, and all my fears are fled;
My life, my joy, my Alexander comes.

Rox. [Within.] Make fast the gate with all its
massy bars!

At length we've conquer'd this stupendous height,
And reach'd the grove.

Sta. Ye guardian gods, defend me!

Roxana's voice! then all the vision's true,
And die I must.

Enter Roxana.

Rox. Secure the brazen gate.

Where is my rival? 'tis Roxana calls.

Sta. And what is she, who, with such tow'ring
pride,

Wou'd awe a princess that is born above her?

Rox. Behold this dagger!—'Tis thy fate, Statira!
Behold, and meet it as becomes a queen.

Pain wou'd I find thee worthy of my vengeance;

Here, take my weapon then; and, if thou dar'st—

Sta. How little know'st thou what Statira dares!
Yes, cruel woman! yes, I dare meet death,
With a resolve, at which thy coward heart
Wou'd shrink. For terror haunts the guilty mind;
While conscious innocence, that knows no fear,
Can, smiling, pass, and scorn thy idle threats.

Rox. Return, fair insolent! return, I say.
Dar'st thou, presumptuous, to invade my rights!
Restore him quickly to my longing arms,
And with him give me back his broken vows;
(For, perjur'd as he is, he still is mine.)
Or I will rend them from thy bleeding heart.

Sta. Alas, Roxana! 'tis not in my power;
I cannot if I wou'd—And, oh, ye gods!

What were the world to Alexander's loss!

Rox. Oh, sorceress, to thy accursed charms
I owe the frenzy that distracts my soul:

To them I owe my Alexander's loss.

Too late thou tremblest at my just revenge,
My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have way.

Sta. Yet think, Roxana, ere you plunge in murder,
Think on the horrors that must ever haunt you;
Think on the furies, those avenging ministers
Of Heaven's high wrath, how they will tear your
All day distract you with a thousand fears; [soul;
And when by night thou vainly seek'st repose,
They'll gather round, and interrupt your slumbers
With horrid dreams, and terrifying visions.

Rox. Add still, if possible, superior horrors.
Rather than leave my great revenge unfinished;
I'll dare 'em all, and triumph in the deed.

Therefore— [Holds up the dagger.

Sta. Hold, hold, thy hand advanc'd in air.

I read my sentence written in thy eyes:

Yet, oh, Roxana, on thy black revenge,
One kindly ray of female pity beam,
And give me death in Alexander's presence.

Rox. Not for the world's wide empire should'st
thou see him.

Fool! but for him thou might'st unheeded live;
For his sake only art thou doom'd to die.
The sole remaining joy that glads my soul,
Is to deprive thee of the heart I've lost.

Enter Slave.

Slave. Madam, the king and all his guards are
come.

With frantic rage they thunder at the gate,
And must e'er this have gain'd admittance.

Rox. Ha!

Too long I've trifled. Let me then redeem
The time mispent, and make great vengeance sure.

Sta. Is Alexander, Oh, ye gods, so nigh,
And can he not preserve me from her fury?

Rox. Nor he, nor Heav'n shall shield thee from
my justice.

Die, sorceress, die, and all my wrongs die with thee.
[Stabs her.

Alex. [Without.] Away, ye slaves! stand off—
Quick let me fly

With lightning's wings? nor heav'n, nor earth,
shall stop me.

Enter Alexander.

Ha! oh, my soul! my queen, my love, Statira!
These wounds! are these my promis'd joys?

Sta. Alas!

My only love, my best and dearest blessing,
Wou'd I had died before you enter'd here;
For thus delighted, while I gaze upon thee,
Death grows more horrid, and I'm lothe to leave thee.

Alex. Thou shalt not leave me—Cruel, cruel stars!
Oh, where's the monster, where's the horrid fiend,
That struck at innocence, and murder'd thee?

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Rox. Behold the wretch, who, desperate of thy love,

In jealous madness gave the fatal blow:
A wretch, that, to possess once more thy love,
Wou'd with the blood of millions stain her soul.

Alex. To dungeons, tortures, drag her from my sight,

Sis. My soul is on the wing. Oh, come, my lord,
Haste to my arms, and take a last farewell.
Thus let me die. Oh! Oh!

Alex. Look up my love.

Oh, Heav'n! and will you, will you take her from me!

Sis. Farewell, my most lov'd lord: Ah, me! farewell.
Yet ere I die, grant this request.

Alex. Oh, speak.

That I may execute before I follow thee.

Sis. Leave not the world till Heav'n demands you. Spare

Roxana's life.—'Twas love of you that caus'd
The death she gave me. And, oh! sometimes think,
Amidst your revels, think on your poor queen;
And, ere the cheerful bow! salute your lips,
Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy. [Dies.

Alex. Yet, ere thou tak'st thy flight—She's gone,
She's gone.

All, all is hush'd, no music now is heard;
The roses wither; and the fragrant breath
That wak'd their sweets, shall never wake 'em more.

Rox. Weep not, my lord! no sorrow can recal her.
Oh, turn your eyes, and, in Roxana's arms,
You'll find fond love, and everlasting truth.

Alex. Hence, from my sight, and thank my dear
That yet thou art alive. [Statira,

Rox. Oh, take me to your arms.
In spite of all your cruelty, I love you:
Yes, thus I'll fasten on your sacred robe;
Thus, on my knees, for ever cling around thee,
Till you forgive me, or till death divide us.

Alex. Hence, fury, hence: there's not a glance
of thine.

But, like a basilisk, comes wing'd with death.

Rox. Oh, speak not thus, to one who kneels for
mercy.

Think for whose sake it was I madly plung'd
Into a crime abhorrent to my nature.

Alex. Off! murd'ers, off! for ever shun my sight;
My eyes detest thee, for thy soul is ruin.

Rox. Barbarian! yes, I will for ever shun thee.
Repeated injuries have steel'd my heart,
And I cou'd curse myself for being kind.

If there is any majesty above,
That has revenge in store for perjur'd love,
Send, heav'n, the (wisest ruin on his head!

Strike the destroyer! lay the victor dead!
Kill the—

But what are curses? Curses will not kill,
Nor ease the tortures, I am doom'd to feel.

Alex. Oh, my fair star, I shall be shortly with
thee!

What means this deadly dew upon my forehead?
My heart too heaves—

Caf. The poison works!

Eum. Eumenes.

Eum. Pardon, dread Sir, a fatal messenger,
The royal Syngambis is no more.

Struck with the horror of Statira's fate,
She soon expir'd, and, with her latest breath,
Left Parisatis to Lyfimachus.

But what I fear most deeply will affect you,
Your lov'd Hephæstion—

Alex. Dead! then he is blest!

But here, here lies my fate. Hephæstion, Clytus!

My victories all for ever folded up
In this dear body. Here my banner's lost,
My standard's triumphs gone.

Oh, when shall I be mad! give orders to
The army that they break their shields, swords,
spears,

Pound their bright armour into dust—Away.
Is there not cause to put the world in mourning?

Burn all the spires, that seem to meet the sky,
Beat down the battlements of every city;

And, for the monument of this lov'd creature,
Root up these bowers, and pave 'em all with gold.

Draw dry the Ganges, make the Indies poor,
To deck her tomb: no shrine nor altar spare,

But strip the pomp from gods to place it there. [Exit.

Enter Theffalus.

Caf. He's gone—but whither?—follow, Theffalus,
Attend his steps, and let me know what passes.

[Exit Theff.

Vengeance, lie still, thy cravings shall be fated.
Death roams at large, the furies are unchain'd,
And murder plays her mighty master-piece.

Enter Polyperchon, Theffalus, and Philip.

Phil. Saw you the king?

Pol. Yes; with disorder'd wildness in his looks,
He rush'd along, till, with a casual glance,

He saw me where I stood: then stepping short,
Draw near, he cry'd—and grasp'd my hand in his,

Where more than fevers rag'd in ev'ry vein.
Oh, Polyperchon! I have lost my queen!

Statira's dead!—and, as he spoke, the tears
Gush'd from his eyes—I more than felt his pains.

Theff. Hence, hence, away!

Caf. Where is he, Theffalus?

Theff. I left him circled by a crowd of princes.
The poor son tears him with that height of horror,
E'en I cou'd pity him—he call'd the chiefs;

Embrac'd 'em round—then, starting from amidst
'em,

Cried out, I come—'twas Ammon's voice—I
know it—

Father, I come; but, let me, ere I go,
Dispatch the business of a kneeling world,

Pol. No more; I hear him—we must meet
anon.

Caf. In Saturn's field—there give a loose to
rapture,

Enjoy the tempest we, ourselves, have rais'd,
And triumph in the wreck which crowns our ven-
geance. [Exeunt.

SCENE, the Palace.

Alexander, with his Hair dishevelled, Lyfimachus,
Eumenes, Perdicas and Attendants. Alexander
discovered.

Alex. Search there; nay, probe me, search my
Pill, draw it out. [wounded reins—

Lyf. We have search'd, but find no hurt.

Alex. Oh, I am shot, a forked burning arrow
Sticks cross my shoulders: the sad venom flies
Like lightning thro' my flesh, my blood, my marrow.

Lyf. How fierce his fever!

Alex. Ha! what a change of torments I endure!
A bolt of ice runs hissing through my bowels;

'Tis sure, the arm of death; give me a chair;
Cover me, for I freeze, and my teeth chatter,
And my knees knock together.

Eum. Have mercy, Heav'n!

Alex. I burn, I burn again;

The war grows wond'rous hot; hey for the Tygris!
—Bear me, Bucephalus, amongst the billows.

[Jumps into the chair.
Oh, 'tis a noble beast; I wou'd not change him
For the best horse the sun has in his stable;

For they are hot, their mangers full of coals;
Their mains are flakes of lightning, curls of fires;
And their red tails like meteors whisk about.

Lys. Help, all—Eumenes, help.

Alex. Ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughter.—

Parmenio—Clytus, do you see yon fellow,
That ragged soldier, that poor tatter'd Greek?
See how he puts to flight the gaudy Persians,
With nothing but a rusty helmet on, through which
The grizzly bristles of his pushing beard
Drive 'em like pikes—ha! ha! ha!

Per. How wild he talks!

Lys. Yet warring in his wildness,

Alex. Sound, sound, keep your ranks close; ay,
now they come;

Oh, the brave din; the noble clank of arms!
Charge, charge apace, and let the phalanx move:
Darius comes—ay, 'tis Darius;
I see, I know him by the sparkling plumes,
And his gold chariot drawn by ten white horses.
But, like a tempest, thus I pour upon him—
He bleeds; with that last blow I brought him down:
He tumbles, take him, snatch the imperial crown.
They fly, they fly; follow, follow—Victoria,
Victoria, Victoria—

[Leaps into the soldier's arms.

Per. Let's bear him softly to his bed.

Alex. Hold, the least motion gives me sudden
death;

My vital spirits are quite parch'd, burnt up,
And all my smoaky entrails turn'd to ashes.

Lys. When you, the brightest star that ever shone,

Shall set, it must be night with us for ever.

Alex. Let me embrace you all, before I die—

[All kneel and weep.

Weep not, my dear companions, the good gods
Shall send ye, in my stead, a nobler prince;
One that shall lead ye forth with matchless conduct.

Lys. Break not our hearts with such unkind ex-
pressions.

Per. We will not part with you, nor change for

Alex. Perdicas, take this ring, [Mars,
And see me laid in the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Lys. To whom does your dread majesty bequeath
The empire of the world?

Alex. To him that is most worthy.

Per. When will you, sacred Sir, that we should give
To your great memory those divine honours
Which such exalted virtue does deserve?

Alex. When you are all most happy, and in peace.
Your hands—Oh, father, if I have discharg'd
The duty of a man to empire born;
If by unwearied toil I have deserv'd
The vast renown of thy adopted son,
Accept this soul which thou did'st first inspire,
And which this sigh thus gives thee back again.

[Dies.

Lys. There fell the pride and glory of the war.

If there be treason, let us find it out;

Lyfimachus stands forth to lead you on;

And swears, by these most honour'd, dear remains,
He will not taste those joys which beauty brings,
Until he has reveng'd the best of kings.

[Exit.

